

Testimony for presentation at hearings sponsored by MSHDA
regarding the 2008-09 Qualified Annual Plan

1. MSHDA is to be commended for language on page 15 A.1 which states ... "Ten percent of all units in any given project (that is not already submitted as a Special Needs/Supportive Housing projects) shall be given leasing priority for Supportive Housing Tenants who meet MSHDA's Supportive Housing Tenant definition with rents structured at or below 30% of AMI".

We urge that language to remain unchanged. We also request that where supportive housing units are in one complex, they be scattered throughout the complex.

2. MSHDA can also be commended for including provisions in this draft listed under VIII, B, 3, page 19, low income targeting that requires:

- a. 10% of the LIHTC units in a development must have income and rents set at 40% of median income (inclusive of existing units). A deep subsidy contract for a minimum of 5 years will satisfy this requirement. And
- b. 10% of the LIHTC units in a development must have income and rents set at 30% of median income (inclusive of existing units). A deep subsidy contract for a minimum of 5 years will satisfy this requirement.

We urge this language remain in the final plan unchanged.

3. The plan also recognizes on page 14, "C", that a significant portion of the 20% holdback for Supportive Housing/Housing for Persons with Special Needs ... is allocated to supportive housing for all other population groups that meet the QAP definitions of Special Needs and Homeless, including but not limited to: Domestic Violence Survivors, and Consumers of Mental Health Services...

We urge continued inclusion of persons served by the Mental Health System in this plan.

4. There continues to be heavy emphasis on serving the "homeless" population. Those of us representing the population of people with

disabilities recognize that there is a percentage already homeless or precariously housed who would qualify as being homeless, but we would like to see a broader recognition that those persons with disabilities who live strictly on or near the SSI income limit need to have more choices for affordable housing.

5. We also ask that the QAP definition of Special Needs/Supportive Housing projects specifically include people **transitioning** from nursing facilities, other institutional settings, AFC and Homes for the Aged.

6. Regarding persons with disabilities, the word "accessible" appears only on page 4 of the document. Under section "C" Michigan's Consolidated plan it states... **The Consolidated Plan is a 5 year document that requires, among other things, that the State of Michigan expand the availability and supply of safe, decent, affordable, and accessible rental housing for low and extremely low-income individuals and families...** Representing persons with current disabilities, baby boomers and others who will be developing disabilities in increasing record numbers, returning veterans disabled in service, mothers and fathers with young children in strollers, those of us who wish to entertain relatives and friends with limited mobility, and those who plan to carry in bags of groceries and move household furnishings in and out of dwellings, we urge you to raise the requirements for numbers of units which have accessible features.

Ideally, every unit built beyond the minimal requirements of expanded accessibility would have basic accessibility, commonly called **visitability**, so that someone using a wheelchair can enter the unit, negotiate the hallways, and use the bathroom. It would also be ideal to have the master bedroom on an accessible floor. Reports from builders are that the cost to build accessibly are minimal, and add very little to the overall cost of construction. The cost being minimal and the benefits to a large segment of the population being substantial, it no longer makes sense for Michigan to build inaccessible housing.

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